

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

Claim 1 (Canceled).

2. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim ~~4~~ 6, wherein the strengthening rings are shrink-fitted around the gear wheel in such manner that the strengthening rings will be firmly shrunk onto the gear wheel with a material-technical tensile/compressive strength within 80% of the 0.2% elastic elongation range of the material.

3. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 2, wherein during the sizing shrink fitting process the toothed rim of the driving gear is envisaged stretched out to a correspondingly larger circle having a predetermined dimension[[],] shrink fits being selected for this circle in accordance with the ISO tables of limits and fits, and that similar considerations are made for each strengthening ring.

4. (Previously Presented) A gear wheel having surrounding strengthening rings connected to the gear wheel teeth, wherein each tooth is fixed like a theoretical beam

between two extreme points in that two strengthening rings, shaped on their insides in conformity with the gear wheel teeth, are fitted around the gear wheel.

5. (Previously Presented) A gear wheel according to claim 4, wherein the strengthening rings are shrink-fitted in such manner that the strengthening rings will be firmly shrunk onto the gear wheel with a material-technical tensile/compressive strength within 80% of the 0.2% elastic elongation range of the material.

6. (Currently Amended) A method for strengthening a gear wheel, wherein strengthening rings are placed around the gear wheel and connected to the gear wheel teeth, and wherein each tooth is fixed like a theoretical beam between two extreme points and two strengthening wheels each shaped on its inside in conformity with the gear wheel teeth, and are shrink-fitted around the gear wheel.